UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/016,790	10/19/2001	Paul James Hough	MICR0252	6061

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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2155	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	10/016,790	HOUGH ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Benjamin R. Bruckart	2155	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>02 November 2006</u>.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) <u>1-27</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) <u>1-27</u> is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6)☐ Other: _____.

Detailed Action

Claims 1-27 are pending in this Office Action.

Claims 1, 12 are amended.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed in the amendment filed 11/2/06 have been fully considered

by are not persuasive. The reasons are set forth below.

<u>Applicant's invention as claimed</u>:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis

for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being unpatentable by "Slennox's eggdrop page"; April 11, 2001 (herein after "Slennox") all the links are incorporated by reference.

Regarding claim 1, a computer-implemented method for including a software resource as a

participant within an online chat session conducted through a messaging service (Slennox:

whatis; IRC bot program; looks like a user on a channel), comprising the steps of:

(a) registering the software resource to indicate that it is available to participate in an

online chat session, when said software resource is executed (Slennox: commands; +chan; the

bot joins the channel);

(b) enabling a user who is participating in the online chat session to include the software resource within a list of participants in the online chat session, the software resource then being available to the user as a participant in the chat session in which the user is also participating (Slennox: acts like a user in the channel; partly line; commands to it);

(c) enabling the user to enter a plain language message within an online chat session user interface (Slennox: commands to the bot);

(d) transmitting the plain language message to the software resource (Slennox commands references are to the bot);

(e) parsing the plain language message received by the software resource (Slennox: command reference and format);

(f) determining a plain language response to the message (Slennox: command reference; bans show you all the bans active on the channel); and

(g) transmitting the plain language response from the software resource back to the user (Slennox: command reference; bans show you all the bans active on the channel), thus enabling the user to interact with the software resource as another participant in the online chat session, by responding to the plain language message that was entered by the user (Slennox: response back through IRC channel).

Regarding claim 2, the method of claim 1, further comprising the step of enabling the user to selectively direct the message to the software resource (Slennox; using the eggdrop: dcc session).

Regarding claim 3, the method of claim 1, further comprising the step of enabling the user to selectively add another person as a participant in the online chat session, said other person also receiving the plain language response from the software resource (Slennox: party line; channel announcements; /invite).

Regarding claim 4, the method of claim 1, wherein, if the software resource is unable to determine a plain language response to the plain language message, the response is one of a nil response and an indication that a response cannot be provided (Slennox: faq: invalid command name).

Regarding claim 5, the method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a graphic indication that the software resource is online and available to participate in the online chat session as a participant (Slennox; user on the channel).

Regarding claim 6, the method of claim 1, wherein the plain language message comprises a query, and the plain language response comprises data responsive to the query (Slennox: shows response; announcements).

Regarding claim 7, the method of claim 1, wherein, for the user, the online chat session is implemented by a messaging service program (IRC chat).

Regarding claim 8, the method of claim 1, wherein the step of registering comprises the step of registering with a messaging service server through which the messaging service is implemented for all participants in the online chat session, including the software resource (Slennox: setup; set servers for IRC logon).

Regarding claim 9, the method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining the plain language response includes the step of employing the software resource to search through data accessible by the software resource to find data provided in the plain language response (Slennox: commands: loads from settings stored on the bot).

Regarding claim 10, a machine readable medium having processor-executable machine instructions for performing steps (b)-(d) as recited in claim 1 (Slennox: command reference and whatis).

Regarding claim 11, a machine readable medium having processor-executable machine instructions for performing steps (a) and (e)-(g) as recited in claim 1 (Slennox: command reference and whatif).

Regarding claim 12, a method for accessing information available through a software resource during a messaging service session (Slennox: whatis, commands), comprising the steps of:

(a) indicating each participant in the messaging service session, at least one user of the messaging service session and a software resource being included a participant in the messaging service session (Slennox: whatis; IRC bot program; looks like a user on a channel);

(b) enabling a user to enter a plain language query in the messaging service session (Slennox: commands to the bot);

(c) transmitting the plain language query to the software resource (Slennox commands references are to the bot);

(d) parsing the plain language query at the software resource (Slennox: command reference and format);

(e) automatically determining information responsive to the plain language query, using the software resource (Slennox: command reference; bans show you all the bans active on the channel); and

(f) transmitting the information responsive to the plain language query back to the user (Slennox: command reference; bans show you all the bans active on the channel), thus enabling the user to access information through the software, wherein the software resource acts as a participant in the messaging service session by responding to the plain language query entered by the user (Slennox: response back through IRC channel).

Regarding claim 13, the method of claim 12, wherein the software resource and all other participants in the messaging service session are coupled in communication over a network (Slennox: all in the same channel; commands).

Regarding claim 14, the method of claim 12, further comprising the step of enabling the user to selectively add the software resource to the messaging service session from a list of prospective participants (Slennox: command reference +channel; dcc to bot from channel).

Regarding claim 15, the method of claim 12, further comprising the step of enabling the user to selectively direct the plain language query to the software resource (Slennox; using the eggdrop: dcc session).

Regarding claim 16, the method of claim 12, wherein the software resource comprises a data manager program that accesses a store of data to find the information responsive to the plain language query transmitted from the user (Slennox: commands: loads from settings stored on the bot).

Regarding claim 17, the method of claim 12, further comprising the step of transmitting an indication from the software resource to the user that information responsive to the plain language query could not be provided (Slennox: faq: invalid command name).

Regarding claim 18, the method of claim 12, further comprising the step of providing an indication to a user when the software resource is unavailable to participate in a messaging service session (Slennox: faq, hostname self-lookup failed).

Regarding claim 19, the method of claim 12, wherein the information provided by the software resource includes a network address at which data responsive to the query are located (Slennox: commands, hostmask).

Regarding claim 20, the method of claim 12, wherein a plurality of software resources are included in a list of prospective participants in the messaging service session (Slennox; users on the channel).

Regarding claim 21, a system for enabling a software resource to respond as a conventional participant in a messaging service session implemented over a network (Slennox: whatis, commands), comprising:

(a) a messaging service server coupled to the network and programmed for implementing registration of prospective instant message participants available to be added to a messaging service session as participants (IRC, channel joining, server setups);

(b) a user computing device coupled to the network and including a processor (Slennox: whatis) programmed to:

    (i) execute a messaging service session in which a user is a participant (Slennox: whatis, commands);

    (ii) add a software resource as a participant in the messaging service session (Slennox: commands; invite); and

    (iii) enable a user to enter a plain language query for information to be obtained from the software resource within the messaging service session (Slennox: commands to the bot); and

(c) a software resource computing device coupled to the network and programmed (Slennox: whatis) to:

    (i) execute the software resource (Slennox: whatis; setup and using);

    (ii) register the software resource with the messaging service server when the software resource is available to participate in a messaging service session (Slennox: whatis; setup, server; join chanel);

    (iii) parse a plain language query received from the user during the messaging service session (Slennox: command reference and format);

    (iv) access data with the software resource to find information responsive to the plain language query (Slennox: commands: loads from settings stored on the bot); and

    (iv) transmit said information to the user computing device over the network (Slennox: command reference; bans show you all the bans active on the channel), thus enabling the user to interact with the software resource as another participant in the online chat session, by enabling the software resource to respond to the plain language query entered by the user (Slennox: response back through IRC channel).

Regarding claim 22, the system of claim 21, wherein the software resource computing device includes a data store from which the information is derived to respond to the plain language

query received during the messaging service session (Slennox: commands: loads from settings stored on the bot).

Regarding claim 23, the system of claim 21, wherein the user computing device includes a user interface that enables a user to enter the plain language query into the messaging service session (Slennox: commands to the bot).

Regarding claim 24, the system of claim 21, wherein the user computing device includes a display on which the messaging service session is viewed, an image viewable during said messaging service session including an indication of whether the software resource is available to participate in the messaging service session (Slennox; user on the channel).

Regarding claim 25, the system of claim 21, wherein the user computer device is programmed to enable a user to selectively add the software resource as a participant in the messaging service session (Slennox: command reference +channel).

Regarding claim 26, apparatus that enables a user to interact with a software resource during a messaging service session (Slennox: whatis, commands), comprising:

(a) a network interface that connects to a network over which the messaging service session is communicated (Slennox: commands; IRC, channel joining, server setups);

(b) a display (Slennox: whatis; computer program; display is inherent part of computer);

(c) a user input device (Slennox: whatis; computer program; input is inherent part of computer; commands input);

(d) a memory in which a plurality of machine instructions are stored (Slennox: setup, commands; storing); and

(e) a processor coupled to the network interface, the display, the user input device, and the memory, said processor executing the machine instructions, causing the processor to carry out a plurality of functions (Shtivelman: col. 7, lines 9-13; computer equipment), including:

(i) registering a user with a messaging service as being available to participate in a messaging service session as a participant (Shtivelman: col. 7, lines 9-19; joining and participating in a session);

(ii) enabling a user to add one or more participants to a messaging service session, at least one participant that is added comprising a software resource that is registered as being available to participate in the messaging service session as a participant (Slennox: command reference +channel);

(iii) enabling a user to enter a plain language query with the user input device (Slennox: commands to the bot);

(iv) transmitting the plain language query over the network to each participant in the messaging service session (Slennox: command reference and format); and

(v) receiving a response over the network from a software resource responding to the plain language query as a participant (Slennox: response back through IRC channel).

Regarding claim 27, apparatus that enables a software resource to interact as a participant during a messaging service session (Slennox: whatis, commands), comprising:

(a) a network interface that connects to a network over which the messaging service session is communicated (IRC, channel joining, server setups);

(b) a memory in which a plurality of machine instructions are stored (Slennox: setup, commands; storing); and

(c) a processor coupled to the network interface, and the memory, said processor executing the machine instructions, causing the processor to carry out a plurality of functions (Slennox: whatis; computer program; processor is an inherent part of computer), including:

(i) registering the software resource with a messaging service as being available to participate in a messaging service session as a participant (Slennox: command reference +channel; server configuration);

(ii) parsing a plain language query received from a user during a messaging service session in which the software resource has been added as a participant, the

software resource being enabled to receive and parse the plain language query (Slennox: command reference and format);

(iii) finding data responsive to the plain language query (Slennox: commands); and

(iv) transmitting the data over the network to a user who entered the plain language query (Slennox: response back through IRC channel).

PRIOR ART

U.S. Patent No. 4,849,898 issued to Adi in col. 2, lines 21-31, lines 50-65.

U.S. Patent No. 5,692,107 issued to Simoudis in col. 4, lines 59- col. 5, line 16.

U.S. Patent No. 7.013,300 issued to Taylor in col. 3, lines 17-29 and col. 8, lines 26-39.

REMARKS

Applicant has made minor amendments to claims 1 and 12 to clarify the "plain language message."

The Applicant Argues:

the Slennox reference does not teach enabling the user to enter 'a plain text language message' because the user enters commands that are of a required format.

In response, the examiner respectfully submits:

The Slennox reference does teach the claimed limitation. A plain language message is not defined as a complete sentence or with any details about how it should or should not be formatted. A plain language message is interpreted to be a textual entry and the input from Slennox is textual. A plain language message is not defined as having or not having of any particular structure or format but a sentence as used to illustrate in applicant's remarks is also formatted using punctuation, nouns, verbs, etcetera. While the examiner understands the differences as argued, the claim limitation does not distinguish over the art. Further, more prior art cited provides evidence that 'plain language messages' for parsing and interpretation are well known in the art.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this

Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE

MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO

MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this

final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Benjamin R. Bruckart whose telephone number is (571) 272-

3982. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-5:30PM with every other Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Saleh Najjar can be reached on (571) 272-4006. The fax phone number for the

organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent

Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications

may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished

applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR

system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Benjamin R Bruckart
Examiner
Art Unit 2155
brb

SALEH NAJJAR
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER